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M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F
H E A L T H .

Y E A R 1957 .

Medical Officer of Health
(part-time)

Dr.D.T.Mc.Donald, M.D. Ch.B(Ed
South Bank, Belford.

Surveyor & Public Health Inspector

Wm.R. Kirk, M.A.P.H.I.,
Seabank, Seahouses.



ANNUAL REPORT.

Upon the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the
BELFORD RURAL DISTRICT
for the year ending 31st. December 1957.

STATISTICS.

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------|
| 1. | Area. | - 39,797 acres. |
| 2. | Registrar-General's estimate of the Resident Population 1957 (mid year) | - 5,030 |
| 3. | Number of inhabited houses (end of 1957) according to Rate Book. | - 1988 |
| 4. | Rateable Value. | - £50035 |
| 5. | Sum represented by a penny rate. | - £194.13.0. |

VITAL STATISTICS.

| <u>Live Births.</u> | <u>Total.</u> | <u>M.</u> | <u>F.</u> | <u>Birth Rate.</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---|
| (Legitimate) | 66 | 32 | 34 | 13.1 per 1000 of estimated resident population. |
| (Illegitimate.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| | 66 | 32 | 34 | |
| <u>Still Births.</u> | | 2 | 0 | (legitimate) |
| <u>Deaths.</u> | 82 | 35 | 47 | <u>Death Rate.</u> |
| | | | | 16.3 per 1000 of estimated resident population. |

| | | |
|---|----------------|------|
| <u>Deaths from Puerperal Causes.</u> | - | Nil. |
| <u>Deaths of Infants under one year of age.</u> | - Legitimate | 3 |
| | - Illegitimate | 0 |
| | Total. | 3 |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----|
| Death rates (i) | all infants per 1000 live births. | 45 |
| (ii) | Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births. | 45 |
| (iii) | Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births. | 0 |

| | |
|--|----|
| <u>Deaths from Cancer (all ages)</u> | 13 |
| <u>Deaths from Measles. (all ages)</u> | 0 |
| <u>Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)</u> | 0 |
| <u>Deaths from Diarrhoea. under 2 years.</u> | 0 |

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (part-time)

Dr. D. T. Mc. Donald, M.D., Ch.B (Edin)
South Bank, Belford.

SURVEYOR & PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

Wm. R. Kirk, M.A.P.H.I.,
Sea Bank, Seahouses.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASE DURING 1956.

During the year the following cases of Notifiable Diseases were reported in the District.

| | | | |
|------------------|----|------------------------|---|
| Measles | 90 | Scarlet Fever | 2 |
| Chickenpox | 10 | Pulmonary Tuberculosis | 1 |
| Whooping Cough | 2 | Food Poisoning | 1 |
| <u>Total 106</u> | | | |

MEASLES appeared among children in Seahouses and North Sunderland towards the end of January and continued in epidemic form in that area, and in Beadnell and Swinhoe districts until April. It is quite certain that all the cases which occurred in this area were not notified, as I had no notification from Dr. W. Hall of Enbleton who has patients in the area. I asked him to let me have his notifications but none were forthcoming. It is of interest to note that the last extensive epidemic of measles occurred in this area, in April, May and June 1950 - seven years ago. This is two years shorter than the period intervening between measles epidemics in the Belford area (1946-1955) when I suggested that in a Rural District it would take about ten years until an unprotected population grew up in order to produce a measles epidemic. It would be more correct to say that this period is probably between 7 and 10 years. Fortunately there were no deaths due to measles.

Two sporadic cases of SCARLET FEVER of a mild type were reported which had no connection with each other; and an isolated case of FOOD POISONING occurred in the area in elderly lady who had recently come to the district. There was no spread.

INFLUENZA In common with the rest of the County, Influenza occurred in the District in October and November. It was of the Asian variety and was mild in type. There was one death caused by the disease.

PREVENTION OF POLIOMYELITIS Innoculation of children where parents had registered them for vaccination against Poliomyelitis was carried out in the District in June and July by General Practitioners and by Medical Officers of the Local Health Authority (the County Council).

There were 82 deaths in the District with a Death Rate of 16.3 per 1000. When this figure is modified by multiplying the comparability factor it is reduced to 14.0 which is still considerably above the figure for the County, viz. 11.5.

The Chief Causes of Death were:-

| | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| Diseases of Heart and Blood Vessels | - | 51. |
| Cancer (7 males 6 females) | - | 13 |
| Lung Cancer (included in the figure above) | - | 2 (both males) |
| Other Respiratory Diseases. | - | 2 |

The ages of Death were as follows

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| Under 1 year. | 1/10 yrs. | 10/20 yrs. | 20/30 yrs. | 30/40 yrs. | 40/50 yrs. | 50/60 yrs. |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 60/70 yrs. | 70/80 yrs. | 80/90 yrs. | 90/100 yrs. | Over 100 yrs. | | |
| 16 | 30 | 23 | 1 | 0 | | |

It will be seen from this table that 70 deaths (80.5%) were in people of 60 yrs. and over.

Births in the District numbered 66 with a birth rate of 13.1 per 1000. When this figure is adjusted by multiplying by the comparability factor, it is raised to 15.1, which is below the figure for the whole country, viz. 16.1 per 1000.

The two facts, a death rate higher and a birth rate lower than those of the County at large; points to the probability that the average age in a Rural District is higher than in the county as a whole. There is no doubt that there is a regular drift of the younger people away from the Rural areas, and probably a tendency for the older people to retire from work and live in a country area during their latter years.

REPORT OF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

WATER SUPPLIES.

The Council owned supplies to the Townships of Belford, Seahouses, Beadnell and Bamburgh again were satisfactory as to quality and quantity except for the summer period when the influx of holiday makers puts a severe strain on the resources. The borehole pump at Seahouses was used throughout the summer season, but only so much as was necessary to maintain a safe level in the reservoir. The nature of the borehole water and the expense of pumping make it undesirable to use more than is absolutely necessary.

Bamburgh and Beadnell suffered the most inconvenience when at times of peak demand shortages caused great annoyance. This is particularly the case at Bamburgh where with the considerable difference in level, the higher houses get little or no water at times. This is almost entirely due to the lack of a suitably placed service reservoir, the 3" pipe which supplies most of the Village being quite inadequate for this purpose. The need to conserve the pressure in the other 3" main to feed the Castle deprives the Village of at least 50% more water.

The shortages at Beadnell were confined as usual to the Harbour Road, and with the increased building in this area, this problem is bound to become more pressing unless the demands of Seahouses on the Beadnell water are sufficiently reduced to leave more water in Beadnell.

The new supply to Belford from Warenton has been most satisfactory and the removal of the Belford Moor Springs has stopped the old complaints of 'brown' water. The Warenton Springs maintained the supply throughout the year.

SEWERAGE.

Reports showing the effluent from the Belford Works as being somewhat below standard continue to be made. This position will, of course, worsen with any further building and the time will come when it will be necessary to increase the capacity of the works.

Occasional complaints were received of sewage on the beach in Beadnell Bay, but on inspection all such evidence had been washed away. It may well be that this occurs when conditions of tide and wind combine in such a way as to bring this about.

The completion of the North Sunderland Scheme early in the year has further improved conditions there and no further complaints have been received from the area. A continued improvement in the condition of the 'lagoon' at the mouth of the Annstead Burn was noted. The increased flow in the 'Runcinan' Sewer does not appear to have caused trouble and the overflow into the west Quarry pond has only operated during prolonged periods of very heavy rain.

HOUSING.

During the year thirteen houses were built by private persons and 43 by the Council. This brings the total of Council-owned houses to 285 of which 209 have been built since 1945. No further building is contemplated in the near future. Land is needed to provide sites for buildings to re-house tenants in unfit houses and it is hoped that this will be acquired soon.

Actions with regard to Unfit Houses.

No. of Houses.

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1. Houses demolished in Clearance Areas. | - |
| 2. Houses demolished not in Clearance Areas. | 6 |
| 3. Houses closed, not demolished. | 25.. |
| 4. Any other houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in above. | - |

Houses made fit by information action under either Housing or Public Health Act. 78

Improvement Grants.No. of Separate Houses.

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Applications submitted to Local Authority during year. | 26 |
| 2. Applications rejected. | 6 |
| 3. Applications approved. | 20 |
| 4. Approximate average grant approved per house. | £201. |
| Total Number of houses approved for grant in area since inception of Scheme. | 134 |

CAMPING . TRES.

The popularity of the camping holiday, though in itself undoubtedly healthy, is creating an ever increasing problem. The fact that the sites were licensed before the War adds to this as, not foreseeing the extent to which it would grow, sites were licensed with 40 caravans or tents per acre. With this standard permitted, sites have become overcrowded, and disposal of refuse and contents of chemical closets becomes very difficult. Unofficial camping on the links is sometimes difficult to control and little active assistance is given by the owners. It is fortunately not so prevalent as to create a danger to health as the spade seems to be regularly used for essential disposal. The main objection is to the litter which is left in the form of tins and broken bottles.

FOOD & DRUGS.

Food Premises. Shops and Hotels were inspected under the Food Hygiene Regulations during routine visits and in general a good standard is being maintained. Much more time is needed for this purpose than pressure of other work permits.

The following is a list of food premises in the Area:-

| | | |
|---|------|----|
| Butchers. | .... | 4 |
| Bakers (with Bakeries attached) | .... | 4 |
| Grocers & General Dealers. | .... | 19 |
| Greengrocers. | .... | 4 |
| Confectioners. | .... | 9 |
| Fishmongers | .... | 1 |
| do. (with vans only) | .... | 3 |
| Fish & Chip Shops. | .... | 3 |
| Cafes. | .... | 6 |
| Hotels. | .... | 17 |
| Boarding Houses. | .... | 6 |
| Public Houses (excluding licensed hotels) | | 8 |
| Kippering Sheds. | .... | 1 |
| Crab Dressing. | .... | 1 |

Food Inspection.

6 visits were made to food premises for inspection of defective food, and the following were voluntarily surrendered and destroyed:

| | | |
|---------------|------|---------|
| Meat. | | 7 Tins. |
| Canned Goods. | | 6 Tins. |



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Milk & Dairies.

The number of licences issued in respect of Special Designated Milk are as follows:-

| | | |
|-------------|-----|----|
| Pasteurised | ... | 1 |
| T.T. | ... | 2' |

In addition there are five producer/retailers of whom
2 sell T.T. Milk, and
3 sell Ungraded Milk.

Ice-Cream.

There are two premises registered for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream, one of which uses the cold-mix process.

15 premises are registered for the sale of ice-cream.
All of these sell only pre-packed ice-cream.

Slaughterhouses.

The two privately owned Slaughterhouses continue to operate though the standard of hygiene it is possible to maintain is not good. Despite their limitations they are kept clean and slaughtering is carried out in a proper manner.

Meat Inspection.

The following tables show the number of animals slaughtered and the carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

| | Cattle excluding cows. | Cows. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs. | Horses |
|---|------------------------------|-------|---------|----------------------|-------|--------|
| Number killed (if known) | 270 | Nil. | 4 | 825 | 85 | Nil. |
| Number Inspected. | 254 | Nil. | 4 | 774 | 82 | Nil. |
| <u>All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci.</u> | | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | 15 | Nil. | Nil. |
| Car cases of which some part or organ was condemned. | 130. | Nil. | Nil. | 4 | 4 | Nil. |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci. | 51.2. | Nil. | Nil. | 2.5. | 0.5 | Nil. |
| <u>Tuberculosis only:</u> | | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | 1 | Nil. |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned. | 8 | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | 2 | Nil. |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis. | 1.6 | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | 1.0 | Nil. |
| <u>Cysticercosis.</u> | | | | | | |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned. | 2 | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. |
| arcases submitted to reatment by refrigeration. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. |
| Generalised and totally condemned. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. | Nil. |

Cysticercosis.

In both the cases a single Degenerated cyst was found in the outer masseter muscle. The carcasses were carefully examined after jointing and the heart and thick skirt finely sliced.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The collection of household refuse remains confined to the four main Villages of Belford, Banburgh, Seahouses and Beadnell. The Council's intention to acquire an additional vehicle and extend the service to the whole District failed to mature on account of the cost and difficulties caused by petrol rationing.

It is however almost certain that the new system will come into operation next year.

The Bedford 7 c.yd. vehicle is now almost ten years old, and it would be wise to consider its replacement.

FACTORIES & WORKSHOPS ACT.

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health:-

| <u>Premises.</u> | <u>Number on Register.</u> | <u>Inspections.</u> | <u>Written Notice.</u> |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Factories in which section 1,2,3,4,5,& 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority. | 6 | 6 | - |
| (11) Factories not included in (1) in which Sec.7 is enforced by Local Authority. | 24 | 19 | - |
| Cases in which defects were found | - | 3 | Remedied . 3 |

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

The continued employment of Mr. Arris as Rodent Operative jointly with North & Islandshires is working satisfactorily. The rodent population has been kept well under control which is borne out by the small number of complaints received. The Public has been most co-operative in reporting such signs of infestation as there have been, due to the Council's farsightedness in giving a free service to private dwellings.

In general and particularly from the Council's point of view it would be preferable for all farm treatments to be carried out by our Operative. A uniform control would then cover the whole area and the cost to the farmer would not be any higher. In some cases it would be less.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

| | Type of Property. | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| | Non-Agricultural. | | | | (5) Agricul- -tural. |
| | (1) Local Authy. | (2) Dwellg. Houses. (inc. Cncl. houses) | (3) All other includg. business premises. | (4) Total of Col.(1)(2) & (3) | |
| 1. Number of properties in Local Authority's District (Notes 1&2) | 10 | 1979 | 415 | 2404 | 104 |
| 2. Number of properties inspected as a result of:- | | | | | |
| (a) Notification. | | 27 | 3 | 30 | 5 |
| (b) Survey under the Act. | 10 | 1845 | 200 | 2055 | 96 |
| (c) Otherwise. | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3. Total inspections carried out in- cluding re-inspect- -ions. | 30 | 1896 | 221 | 2147 | 98 |
| 4. Number of properties inspected which were found to be infested by:- | | | | | |
| (a) Rats. (Major. | 4 | 5 | - | 7 | 6 |
| (Minor. | 1 | 95 | 5 | 101 | 31 |
| (b) Mice (Major. | - | 25 | 2 | 27 | 4 |
| (Minor. | | 115 | 15 | 130 | 15 |
| 5. Number of infested properties (in sec. iv.) treated by L.A. | 5 | 241 | 7 | 252 | 10 |
| 6. Total treatments carried out - in- cluding re- treatments. | 11 | 243 | 10 | 263 | 11 |

